

PERSONAL ATTENTION -
CONFIDENTIAL

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RE: REDIRECTION OF COMMUNIST INVESTIGATIONS

As a result of a recent survey which I instructed be made, it is apparent that a redirection, as well as a reevaluation of our investigations in the field of Communism, is imperative. Our great need for Agent personnel dictated that we must explore the results and efficacy of our Communist investigations in order that a determination might be made as to whether substantial Bureau personnel may not now be released from such investigations without prejudicing the program or precipitating possible embarrassment. The criterion must become not what is merely desirable but rather what is necessary; our present shortage of personnel and the demands of other types of investigation dictate that our investigative standard be not what we should like to do but rather what we must do in any given category of operations. Were Communism the only subject over which we have investigative interest and concern, the problem would be simple. But this is not the case. The Bureau has many other responsibilities in many other investigative fields, all situations fraught with the possibility of embarrassment if such responsibilities are not adequately discharged. The problem, therefore, becomes a weighing of values or necessities in a dispassionate, realistic manner, recognizing our emergency personnel situation.

Even apart from the necessity for the conservation of manpower, it is clear that certain duplicative practices have developed in the handling of Communist matters which must be corrected in any event. Furthermore, unlike the usual investigation which comes to logical fruition through prosecutive processes, cases relating to Communist investigations, particularly of organizations, have a tendency to perpetuate themselves with perennial agent effort expended to develop information largely of a cumulative character. It is imperative, therefore, that we establish a basic policy whereby, once having developed a comprehensive picture concerning an organization or individual having Communist connections, our procedures thereafter be examined in such manner as to preclude unnecessary expenditure of supervisory, stenographic and clerical effort. In this regard, it definitely appears that an inordinate amount of agent time is spent correlating, coordinating and ostensibly

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evaluating material already available in a field office for the single purpose of getting this material from the field office to the Bureau in the form of reports. By streamlining the system, by greater selectivity in the submission of data to the Bureau, and by contemplating the Communist menace on a more practical basis, a very high percentage of agent personnel can, I am certain, be employed on other work of a productive nature.

I want it clearly understood that the Bureau is not deemphasizing its Communist program. On the contrary, by greater emphasis on the development of live sources of information and less emphasis on individual investigations as such, the program should become far more meaningful, effective, and our efforts characterized by quality rather than quantity. In this regard, experience has conclusively shown that we do not develop information of significant value concerning Communism by reason of having large numbers of agents assigned cases, but rather by reason of highly placed informants and other sources of real quality.

I wanted you to have the benefit of the foregoing preliminary observations as a basis for appreciating and implementing the instructions hereinafter to follow.

I. CASES RELATING TO ORGANIZATIONS

A. Communist Party, U.S.A.

All Bureau instructions requiring the submission of periodic or other progress or status reports are canceled. Effective immediately, reports shall be submitted to the Bureau only when any office has substantive material of importance to the over-all Communist coverage. Whenever possible and practical, material may be submitted to the Bureau in letter form.

Investigation of the Communist Party as an organization is to continue as in the past with such file breakdowns as may be necessary to facilitate the investigation of the Party. It is desired, however, that greater selectivity be employed with respect to material incorporated in investigative reports. The tendency to report verbatim extracts from publications or speeches, as well as the detailed incorporation of general intelligence readily available from publications, should be carefully watched. In this connection, a central research desk is being established at the Seat of Government for the purpose of conducting continuous, intensive research relative to Communist literature.

It is elementary that the objective of our inquiry concerning the Communist Party is fundamentally the development of admissible evidence with a view to possible prosecution and the obtaining of significant intelligence concerning the Party, particularly its instructions and policies. To avoid duplicate reporting of data, field offices should strive to restrict their reports to material of pertinence concerning the Party within the division territory. At the Seat of Government a careful review will be made of reports submitted and the field appropriately advised for its guidance in those instances where extraneous, unnecessary, and repetitious material is being presented.

B. Socialist Workers Party and Workers Party

The files on the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party are to be

maintained in a pending active assigned status by the Office of Origin. They should be carried in pending inactive status in auxiliary offices where good reason does not demand that they be carried in a pending active status. The Office of Origin shall continue to submit reports when facts warrant. An auxiliary office shall be defined, for the purposes of this bulletin, as any office other than the Office of Origin wherein there is current activity of the organization.

In auxiliary offices where these cases are maintained in a pending inactive status, information should continue to be developed through established sources; that is, through informants, technical and microphone surveillances, trash covers, and literature, this information to be channelized to the appropriate file and the Bureau advised by letter or other more expeditious means only where unusual and significant developments occur. The Office of Origin should be supplied copies of communications of this character sent the Bureau. It is the responsibility of the auxiliary office to insure that effective liaison is maintained with established sources concerning these cases, even though pending inactive, and that the material from those sources is being processed and channelized to the appropriate file. As these cases come up on tickler, the field supervisory official shall determine that information is consistently and currently going into the auxiliary office file and, if not, the necessary sources should be developed to insure this will be done. Furthermore, where the organization may be contemplating a significant meeting or other activity within the territory covered by an auxiliary office, appropriate coverage thereof shall be effected. In any instance where an auxiliary office obtains information normally not available to the Office of Origin reflecting on the overall activities of the organization, the auxiliary office should supply this information by letter or other more expeditious means to the Office of Origin to assist the latter in the submission of its reports to the Bureau. This system is designed to relieve auxiliary offices of the burden of submitting periodic investigative reports and generally to reduce the amount of paper work involved.

C. Cases Relating to Other "Splinter Groups"

Cases relating to so-called "splinter groups," other than the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party, shall be made pending inactive in all offices and the cases followed as in auxiliary offices under "B" above except where good reason demands that they be carried in a pending active status.

D. Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico

This case is to be handled exactly as cases relating to other "splinter groups" under "C" above.

E. Cases Relating to Front Organizations, Foreign Language Groups, Youth Groups, and Communist Infiltration of Labor Organizations

These cases shall be handled in the same manner as cases relating to the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party as set forth under "B" above. Of course there will be instances in which such cases do not merit continuous investigative attention, in which event they should be made inactive or closed. This policy has for its purpose, as earlier indicated, the streamlining of procedures with respect to the handling of cases of this type after the development of a comprehensive basic picture through investigation of the Communist character and connections of an

organization or group. Necessarily, therefore, as new organizations develop or new inquiries are authorized, field offices will be required to supply through reports the comprehensive picture concerning the organization, thereafter handling the case as provided for in this section. The instructions contained in this paragraph are, of course, not to be construed as requiring that cases in these categories presently in a closed status be made pending inactive.

It shall no longer be required that any office having cases relating to Communist infiltration of labor organizations endeavor to set forth the officers of each local. Instead, offices shall concern themselves only with Communists and Communist activity within the organizations.

With respect to all cases under this section, the practice of quoting excerpts from publications and resolutions verbatim in reports shall be discontinued. Offices need merely make reference to a particular item and give the gist of resolutions where the publications and resolutions are available to or have been supplied the Bureau. Care should, of course, be exercised to insure that materials are accurately synopsisized.

As previously suggested, duplicate reporting of material by offices shall be eliminated. By employing the practice of having auxiliary offices supply material relating to an organization or group on a national basis to the Office of Origin by letter or other more expeditious means, this undesirable practice should be corrected. Furthermore, the wasteful tendency to send reports "To All Continental Offices" or to a great many different offices must be carefully watched. Copies of reports should be supplied offices only where significant information of particular pertinence to designated offices is contained in the report.

The existing practice whereby the same official organs or other publications of various organizations or groups are read and reported by agents in several different offices shall be discontinued. The review of publications, in so far as practical, by agents shall be restricted to the Office of Origin. The work of clipping and mounting extracts from publications for appropriate files shall be performed by clerks and, in proper instances, by Special Employees. The reading of Communist literature in auxiliary offices shall be with the practical view of getting material of pertinence from publications and into the proper file, this work to be performed by clerks and, in proper instances, by Special Employees.

II. CASES RELATING TO INDIVIDUALS

By reason of the limitations of personnel, it is essential that at least for the time being we suspend the building of a cumulative record with respect to the "Key Figures" and desist in our effort ultimately to investigate every member of the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party and the Workers Party. Bearing this in mind, the following instructions are issued for your guidance pending further advice:

A. Key Figures

Cases relating to key figures, except those relating to top functionaries hereafter discussed, shall be placed in a pending inactive status when basic information has been developed and reported in accord with existing requirements. It is imperative,

however, that established sources be continued and still further informant coverage effected. In this connection, information developed through informants, technical and microphone surveillances, trash covers, literature, and otherwise, concerning the key figures shall be abstracted and directed in the most economical and expeditious manner to the appropriate individual case file. As cases relating to the key figures come up on tickler, the field supervisory official shall insure that current information is being channelized to the file concerning a key figure and, if such is found not to be the case, necessary coverage shall be effected. As information is developed reflecting a change in the subject's status, the Bureau should be advised in order that the security index may be maintained in a current status.

It is to be understood, of course, that as new key figures may be developed, active investigation shall be conducted and a comprehensive report submitted concerning the new key figures, following which the case may be made pending inactive and handled as provided above. By the same token, as new key figures are developed, a recommendation shall be made for the preparation of a security index card under existing instructions where such has not already been done.

It is realized that circumstances will arise infrequently which will justify the replacing of a key figure case in an active status for a limited period of time, and this action is of course authorized.

B. Security Matter - C Investigations

Existing manual instructions with respect to the opening of Security Matter - C investigations based on Party membership are hereby suspended. It is not desired that dead files be opened merely upon the basis of a list of members of the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party or the Workers Party. When lists of such members are obtained, the names of the individuals should be properly indexed and the list filed in the general file. Thereafter, if additional information is received reflecting Party activity on the part of such an individual, a dead file on him should be opened. Information thereafter received concerning the individual shall be channelized to that dead file.

Where information is received through established sources or otherwise indicating that an individual identified as a member of the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party or the Workers Party is dangerous or potentially dangerous to the internal security, a case shall be opened and investigation conducted with a view to recommending the preparation of a security index card, should the dangerous or potentially dangerous character of the individual be established through investigation. Membership alone is not to be construed as rendering an individual dangerous or potentially so, but in addition to membership, statements or acts of a Party member indicating dangerousness shall be present prior to the opening of a case for active investigative attention.

C. Security Index

Existing manual instructions designed to keep the Security Index in a current status should continue to be followed.

D. Top Functionaries

In order that the maximum effective results may be obtained, the principal

investigative effort with respect to individuals will be directed toward top functionaries of the Party as distinguished from the ordinary key figure. In this connection, each field office is instructed to supply the Bureau the name or names of the top functionaries in its territory which the field office recommends to be the subject of continuous, active, investigative attention. The Bureau desires to be very selective in this matter and to concentrate its efforts upon those individuals who, on a national basis, are the guiding hands in the Communist movement. Therefore, the criterion in recommending the names of top functionaries should be whether it is necessary to give the particular subject continuous, active, investigative attention in order to keep abreast of Communism on a national basis in the United States. Necessarily, such an individual would be on a high policy level in the movement. Letters recommending certain functionaries for continuous, active, investigative attention should be supported by the reasons justifying the recommendation. At the Seat of Government a careful appraisal will be made of the field's recommendations to insure that there has been a proper selectivity and that we are devoting our attention to the real top functionaries. Following this appraisal, each office will be individually advised concerning the cases to be maintained in a pending active assigned status.

III. ~~COMMUNIST~~ CHARTS

The requirement calling for the maintenance of these charts is hereby eliminated.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREGOING PROCEDURE

The foregoing instructions are based on the fact that the significant information being developed by our field offices concerning Communism has come from informants, technical and microphone surveillances, trash covers, occasional displays of investigative resourcefulness, and literature. It is desired that these vital sources be continued, intensified, and expanded. By continuing these sources and eliminating unnecessary paper work, it is believed that field offices may effect a substantial reduction in the number of agents presently assigned to Communist cases and at the same time preclude the likelihood of any embarrassment to the Bureau.

As a general proposition, the Bureau desires that less emphasis be placed on individual investigations as such, as well as excessive paper work, and more emphasis placed on the development of live sources and informants capable of supplying information of quality.

In order that maximum effectiveness may be realized from the new procedure, it will be necessary that sound judgment be exercised by the field supervisory official handling Communist matters to insure that a proper evaluation is made of material being received from established sources and the Bureau advised of significant and unusual developments where cases are carried in a pending inactive status. The type of information field offices in the past have supplied the Bureau by letter, teletype or other more expeditious means between reports is generally the type that you should continue to transmit by this means.

Additionally, field offices shall insure that appropriate, positive methods and procedures are employed in order that material obtained from established sources is being channeled to pertinent files. This is essential and the very heart of the new program.

Field offices shall necessarily be alert to supply the Bureau for indexing purposes the names of new individuals who become associated with organizations or groups having Communist connections.

The Bureau should also be advised for indexing purposes concerning the name and any identifying data relative to any individual identified as a member of the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party, or the Workers Party, where the Bureau has not received previous advice of this fact.

In the handling of material obtained through trash covers, in so far as the piecing together of the material is concerned, clerical employees whose loyalty and integrity are assured should be utilized, their work to be under the direct supervision of an agent.

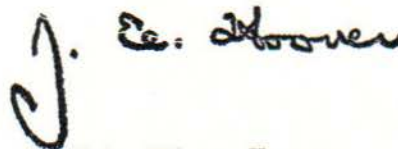
Through the establishment of a central research desk at the Seat of Government, the field will ultimately be relieved of responsibility for the reading and processing of many different publications. It is believed that this research desk will be of the utmost assistance to the field inasmuch as material in captioned form can from time to time be supplied field offices to assist in the evaluation of information received. Field offices should, of course, not discontinue to any degree their processing of literature until the research desk has been fully established and the field advised.

Cases of all types should be constantly under careful evaluation, both in the field and at the Seat of Government, to insure that they are necessary to our coverage. Field offices are encouraged to advise the Bureau in any instance where, in the judgment of an office, the case does not merit further attention. Particularly, cases (presently pending active) which these instructions permit being made pending inactive should be carefully evaluated and appropriate recommendations made for the closing of a case entirely, where this appears proper. I desire that cases not drag on endlessly without a definite objective and purpose. For this reason, the field should be alert to help the Bureau in evaluating Communist cases by supplying advice in proper instances that further inquiry does not appear warranted or that a particular procedure may be ineffective or inefficient.

Agents in Charge shall arrange for an immediate conference of agents handling Communist matters and carefully review with them these instructions to insure that they are fully understood. Immediate steps should be taken to implement the program as redirected.

I desire to be advised 30 days from the time this communication is received by an office as to the number of agents released from Communist to other types of investigative work. Inasmuch as an enormous amount of paper work is being eliminated, a substantial savings in agent time to handle these cases should be realized.

Very truly yours,



John Edgar Hoover
Director